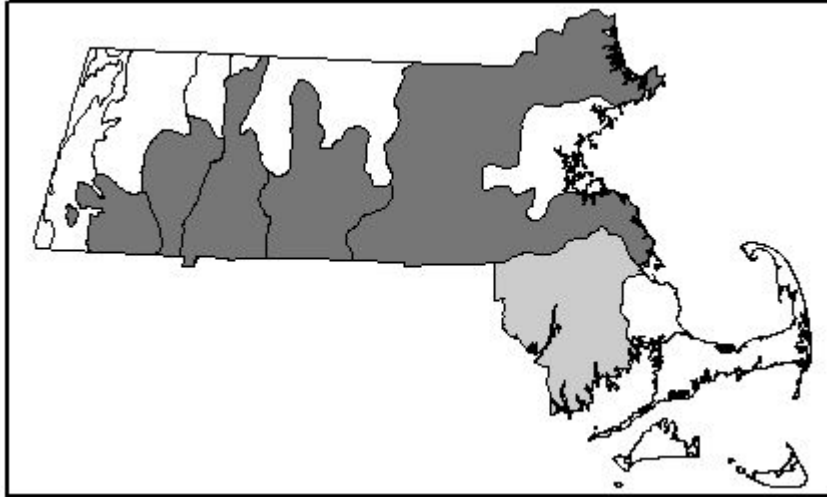


Community Name: OAK - HEMLOCK - WHITE PINE FOREST

Community Code: CT1B100000

SRANK: S5



Concept: A mixed conifer - hardwood forest normally occurring in the southern part of the state, often on dry, acidic slopes.

Environmental Setting: Common on midslopes on rocky, shallow well-drained soils, with few nutrients. The community grades into Northern Hardwood - Hemlock- White Pine Forests to the north and on moister sites, which typically have more hemlock. To the south and on drier sites, White Pine - Oak Forest and Mixed Oak Forest become more common.

Vegetation Description: Oaks (*Quercus alba*, *Q. prinus*, *Q. rubra*), black birch (*Betula lenta*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), and red maple (*Acer rubrum*) in association with hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) and white pine (*Pinus strobus*). Relative proportions of the species vary greatly among sites. Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) is a common associate, and chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) sprouts are common. The shrub layer is patchy and sparse, with witch-hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*), mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*), lowbush blueberry (*Vaccinium angustifolium*), and maple-leaved viburnum (*Viburnum acerifolium*) characteristically present. The herbaceous layer also tends to be sparse and with little diversity: Indian cucumber (*Medeola virginiana*), wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*), wild sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*), wild oats (*Uvularia sessilifolia*), star flower (*Trientalis borealis*), and Canada Mayflower (*Maianthemum canadense*) are typical.

Associations: May be on the moister end of the continuum of dry, acidic communities that contain a variety of tree oak and pine species. More work is needed to define types.

Habitat Values for Associated Fauna: The fauna of this community is richer than but overlaps with that of the mixed oak communities. There is a large suite of neotropical migrant birds that are more likely to be found here, in some of the larger sites, including about 15-16 warblers, Eastern Wood-Pewee (*Contopus virens*), and Great Crested Flycatcher (*Miarchus crinitus*). Where mountain laurel occurs with beech trees, Black-throated Blue Warblers (*Dendroica caerulescens*) may occur, and if there are low spots with large trees and fairly dense shrubs, Canada Warblers (*Wilsonia canadensis*) often occur. In large sites, large mammals, such as bear and moose, occur with the forest as part of their habitat. Common small mammals include smoky shrew (*Sorex fumeus*), masked shrew (*S. cinereus*), short-tailed shrew (*Blarina brevicauda*), woodland jumping mouse (*Napaeozapus insignis*), white-footed mouse (*Peromyscus leucopus*), and gray squirrels (*Sciurus carolinensis*), chipmunks (*Tamias striatus*), and red squirrels (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*), where hemlock are dominant. Amphibians would include the ubiquitous Northern Redback Salamanders (*Plethodon cinereus*) and red efts, the juvenile stage of red-spotted newts (*Notophthalmus v. viridescens*).

Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

Associated Rare Plants:

NONE KNOWN

Associated Rare Animals:

NONE KNOWN

**Examples with
Public Access:**

Hiram Fox WMA, Worthington; East Brimfield Lake Property, ACOE, Brimfield; Conant Brook Dam Property, ACOE, Monson.

Threats:

Management Needs:

Synonyms

USNVC/TNC:

Pinus strobus -Tsuga canadensis Forest Alliance -- Pinus strobus - Tsuga canadensis Lower New England, Northern Piedmont Forest [CEGL006320]; Includes: Tsuga canadensis - Betula alleghaniensis Forest Alliance -- Tsuga canadensis - Fagus grandifolia Forest [CEGL006088].

MA (old name):

CNE MESIC TRANSITIONAL FOREST ON SANDY/GRAVELLY SOILS.

ME:

Related to: Hemlock slope forest community.

NH:

Acidic, hemlock- beech- oak- pine forest.

VT:

Not described.

NY:

Part of: Appalachian oak - pine forest, and Pine - northern hardwood forest or Hemlock - northern hardwood forest and Pine - northern hardwood forest.

CT:

Part of: Tsuga canadensis forests.

RI:

Related to: Hemlock - Hardwood Forest.

Weatherbee:

Part of: Mesic Acidic Oak / Conifer Forest Community.

Author:

P. Swain

Date:

8/31/99